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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5409
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0385

S E C R E T KINGSTON 001470

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR (JOE TILGHMAN)
INR/IAA (BOB CARHART)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/24/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [JM](#) [XL](#)

SUBJECT: JAMAICA: MEET THE KEY CABINET MINISTERS OF THE
NEW GOVERNMENT

REF: A. A KINGSTON 1389

[B](#). B KINGSTON 1012

[C](#). C KINGSTON 1445

[D](#). D KINGSTON 1462

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission James Heg for reasons 1.4 (b)
and (d)

Summary

1.(U) This is the second of several biographical cables, detailing the leaders of the new government of Jamaica. New Prime Minister Bruce Golding has announced 18 Cabinet Ministers (including himself) to direct the new Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) government. While local media and the opposition People's National Party (PNP) have made a bit of a stir about the size of the new cabinet, Golding has defended his choices as necessary to bring about strong reforms to the government and the economy. Most of the new Ministers were not surprises; many of those named had previously held positions as Opposition Shadow Ministers.

Kenneth Baugh Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

2.(U) Dr. Kenneth Baugh, was temporarily appointed leader of the Opposition Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) in 2005. The move was a stop-gap measure after Edward Seaga resigned as party president and at the time heir-apparent Bruce Golding did not hold a seat in Parliament. Baugh says while he has never made it public, he once eyed the JLP top job. "Anybody who is active in politics has that ambition but as time goes along you learn to compromise," he told The Sunday Gleaner.

3.(SBU) With over 30 years experience as a surgeon, Kenneth Baugh knows the importance of patience during an operation. Baugh served as Minister of Health (1980-1989) and during recent years has served again as Shadow Minister of Health, but was recently named the new Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade by Prime Minister (PM) Bruce Golding. Baugh also was designated Deputy Prime Minister, confirming his solid JLP background and reliability in the eyes of the new PM. However, many were surprised at Baugh's announcement as Minister of Foreign affairs, as he has never held any positions in the past related to foreign affairs. (Note: Karl Samuda, the Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, was widely expected to be named. End Note.)

4.(U) Born in Spring Mount, St. James, to one of the

country's most respected families, Kenneth Baugh Jr. is the fourth of 10 children. He studied medicine at the University of the West Indies Mona campus, graduating in 1968; he later studied general surgery at the Royal College of London. He joined the staff at Cornwall Regional Hospital in his home parish in 1976 at a time when Jamaicans were divided on whether to accept or reject then Prime Minister Michael Manley's socialist policies. Dr. Baugh said his main passion was medicine, but as the 1970s wore on, he became more socially aware and eventually became a JLP member.

5.(U) His return in 1997 resulted in double disappointment as the JLP was routed at the polls by the People's National Party (PNP) and he lost the West Central St. Catherine seat to Alethia Barker. That constituency had been a safe seat for the party for almost 30 years through Enid Bennett; five years later he turned the tables on Ms. Barker with a comfortable win.

6.(U) Dr. Baugh, a medical doctor by profession, took a break from representational politics after the Seaga-led JLP lost the 1989 parliamentary elections. He returned to active politics in the late 1990s and was returned to the House of Representatives following the 2002 elections. Dr. Baugh is married to Vilma and is the father of three children.

Audley Shaw Minister of Finance and the Public Service

7.(U) Audley Shaw was born on June 13, 1952 in Manchester, Jamaica. He attended Knox College, Holmwood Technical High school and Northern Illinois University. Audley was first elected as a Member of Parliament (MP) in 1993 for the

North East Manchester constituency. He has been a Deputy Leader of the JLP since 1999, and previously served as the Shadow Minister of Information and Culture, Shadow Minister of Public Utilities and Transport and Shadow Minister of Industry and Commerce.

8.(SBU) At one time Shaw, a loyal protigi of former JLP leader Edward Seaga, was seen as a possible successor to the reigns of the JLP. However the local media has criticized a lack of knowledge on key international and economic issues is seen as a major drawback, and when Bruce Golding returned to the party, Shaw was once again brushed aside. Shaw has been successful in the private sector, and is well versed in micro-economic matters. Despite some weaknesses, he is still seen as a loyal JLP stalwart and it comes as no surprise that he has been named Minister of Finance and the Public Service by PM Golding. However, in a meeting with DCM and econoff in July, he came across as very focused and very articulate on financial matters (Reptel B).

9.(U) Audley Shaw is married to Maureen Shaw, and they maintain their home in the Manchester constituency he represents. The Shaws are quite wealthy, but maintain involvement with a large number of youth clubs and other civic groups. Mr. Shaw enjoys walking and reading.

Derrick Smith Minister of National Security

10.(U) Once considered a possible "dark horse" candidate to succeed Edward Seaga for the presidency of the JLP, Derrick Smith began his political career in 1981 when Seaga appointed him to the Senate. Derrick was born in Kingston, Jamaica on November 27, 1943. He attended Calabar High School and then "College of Arts Science and Technology" (now the University of Technology or UTECH). Derrick became president of the St. Andrew Jaycees of Jamaica in 1975 and later President of Jaycees of Jamaica in 1978; it was this leadership experience that Smith credits his leadership skills and his successful entry into politics.

11.(U) Derrick Smith's long list of political positions includes: Minister of Parliament (MP) for Kingston West Central in 1981, MP for North Western St. Andrew since 1989, Area Council Chairman for the JLP, Deputy Leader of the JLP, and Shadow Minister for National Security from 1993 until the September 3, 2007 general elections. Therefore it comes as no surprise that Derrick was selected to be the Minister of National Security by Bruce Golding.

12.(S) There have been allegations in the past from British High Commission contacts that Smith was involved with known gang leaders. Sources stated that Smith, along with then JLP boss Seaga, were complicit in weapons trafficking in a 2002 Department of Defense report. At the time the British had placed phone taps on suspected gang members in Jamaica, and recorded a phone call from Derrick Smith to a known gang leader ordering them to "quiet things down for a while." Source stated that for about two weeks after the phone call there were no indications of weapons trafficking. In the past in his role as Shadow Minister for Justice, Smith expressed interest in DEA policies and operations in Jamaica. In the Ambassador's initial meeting with Smith upon taking office (Septel), he appeared serious about combatting crime and corruption, and prepared to cooperate with the U.S.

13.(U) Derrick is married with three sons and currently resides in Kingston. He enjoys reading, horse racing and photography and is a steward of the Jockey Club of Jamaica as well as the Kingston Cricket Club.

Dorothy Lightbourne Attorney General and Minister of Justice

14.(U) Dorothy Lightbourne was born October 6, 1938. She is single, and has been a practicing attorney all her adult life. Ms. Lightbourne attended Wolmers High School for Girls and Hull University, Yorkshire, England; receiving a BA (honors) in Law Sociology and later Barrister at Law and Attorney at Law.

15.(U) Ms. Lightbourne's took her first oath of office as a Senator appointed as one of eight JLP opposition Senators in 1984, and served as Deputy President of the Senate from 1986-1993. She has a reputation for being outspoken and in

her capacity as Shadow Minister Attorney General and for Women's Affairs, has often been quoted in the local media expressing her opinions. Ms Lightbourne was selected as the new Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

Andrew Holness: Minister of Education

16.(U) Andrew Micheal Holness was born in St. Catherine on July 22, 1972. He was educated at St. Catherine High School and the University of the West Indies (UWI). He joined a university political branch of the JLP in 1992 while enrolled at UWI, and commenced active involvement with the party in 1993. In 1997 Holness was selected by the JLP to contest the general elections in the West Central St. Andrew constituency and at age 25 was the youngest person contesting elections, and second youngest in history to win a seat in Parliament. (Note: current PM Bruce Golding was 24 years old when he won his first seat. End Note.)

17.(U) Holness previously served as Opposition Spokesperson on Land and Development (1999-2002), Housing (2002-May 2005) and Education (from June 2005 until the current election). He was announced as the new Minister of Education in Bruce Golding's new 18-member cabinet.

18.(U) Andrew Holness is married and still one of the youngest MPs at 35 years old. He enjoys chess, table tennis, fishing and Jamaican literature. Holness started as a pre-trained teacher, and later worked as a research assistant and as an executive assistant to former PM Edward

Seaga.

Karl Samuda Minister of Industry and Commerce

19.(U) Karl Samuda was born on February 8, 1842; he attended Ardenne High School, and got his BachelorQs of Communications from the University of Ottawa. Samuda won his first seat in Parliament in 1980 for the JLP, winning the North Central St. Andrew constituency, the same seat he still holds today. Karl SamudaQs political career has been anything but typical.

20.(SBU) In the early 1990s Samuda was a vociferous member of the so-called Gang of Five, speaking out against then JLP Chief Edward Seaga, referring to Seaga's leadership style as a "one-man band". Then in 1992 Samuda crossed the floor as switched allegiance to the rival PeopleQs National Party (PNP), and promptly was re-elected to the same seat in North Central St. Andrew in the March 1993 elections. He was appointed as Minister of Industry, Tourism and Commerce by then PNP leader Prime Minister P.J. Patterson (PM PJP). In early 1995 PM PJP announced a Cabinet reshuffling at which time Samuda resigned from his position, disappointed at not getting a full ministerial position in the new Cabinet.

21.(U) Later in 1995, Samuda returned to the fold and rejoined the JLP, once again winning his old seat in North Central St. Andrew. A recent article in the local media carried the headline, "Karl Samuda: Will always win his seat", a statement that has held true to date, as he easily won the race on the recent September 2007 general elections. Samuda was the chief architect of the JLPQs resurgence, and current General Secretary of the JLP, advising Bruce Golding and the rest of the JLP in their successful campaign. Capping this recent success is SamudaQs appointment as the new Minister of Industry and Commerce.

22.(SBU) Karl Samuda is married and has three sons. Outside of politics he also is a successful businessman. He enjoys dominoes, bird shooting, and swimming. Energetic, affable, and opportunistic, Samuda is a superb networker and is considered a savvy politician who is difficult to intimidate.

James Robertson Minister without Portfolio (Office of the Prime Minister)

23.(U) James Rudolph Edward Robertson was born on June 9, 1966 in Kingston, Jamaica. James was educated at Mona Preparatory School, Campion College, Beadles College in the UK, and Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

24.(U) Robertson got involved with politics through the JLP youth organization, Generation 2000 (Gen2k) in the late 1980s. He has also been a campaign manager for the JLP in St. Catherine and Clarendon. Robertson became a Standing Committee Member in the JLP in 1995, and was appointed as Opposition Senator in 1998, serving until 2002 when he was elected as MP for the Western St. Thomas constituency. Robertson won the same seat again in the recent September 2007 elections, albeit with a closer margin of victory than before.

25.(SBU) Despite RobertsonQs relatively young age, and the fact he is only about to begin his second term as an elected MP, he is seen as a major player in the JLP. He held the title of Deputy Party Leader in the JLP during the most recent stint as an Opposition MP. Robertson was associated with a group of young JLP followers, with the moniker Qthe Young TurksQ, who sought to push Edward Seaga out of the party leadership during the 1990s. He has been a public supporter of Bruce Golding for leadership since that time.

26.(C) In 2004, Robertson was named along with fellow JLP members, Shahine Robinson and Horace Chang, as being involved with money laundering and organized crime by local sources. According to DEA sources he was involved with Norris Nembhard, a drug kingpin awaiting deportation to the U.S. The source alleged that Robertson's father, Ishmael Robertson, was forced to hand over acres of land to settle his son's drug debts to Nembhard. Robertson has also had frictions with fellow JLP stalwarts in the past. In 2003 he defeated Babsy Grange as Deputy Leader, and caused her to lose her composure and shout expletives from the podium during a party conference. In the past he also was critical of Bruce Golding for not standing up to Seaga earlier and for walking away and forming the new party instead of fighting it out. These past frictions maybe the reason why Robertson was given the most minor Cabinet post of all 18 nominees. However, because of his long service and current rank within the party, Golding was unable to completely bypass him for the Cabinet.

27.(U) James Robertson is married and has two children. He also is a businessman, Managing Director of a company called Precision Enterprises.

Bruce Golding Minister for Defence and Minister of Planning and Development

28.(U) Prime Minister Bruce Golding, as is common in Jamaica, has taken on two portfolios himself. He is the Minister of Defence as well as Minister of Planning and Development. (Note: For biographic information on Golding see reftel A. End Note.) So far, while wearing the Defence hat, Golding has pledged that Jamaica will continue the U.S.-Jamaica partnership for security.

Conclusion

29.(SBU) The new JLP cabinet is an interesting mix of loyal JLP stalwarts who have paid their dues, and seven younger and better educated new-comers. There are many immediate challenges facing this group, such as burdensome debt(Reftel C), high crime(Reftel D), combined with the high expectations that come from being the fresh new face of government after 18 years in Opposition.
JOHNSON